

What are the Signs of Marfan Syndrome?

Knowing the signs of Marfan syndrome can save lives

People are born with Marfan syndrome and related disorders, but they may not notice any features until later in life. However, features of Marfan syndrome and related disorders can appear at any age. Some people have many features at birth or as young children. Other people develop features, including aortic enlargement, as teens or even as adults. Some features are progressive, meaning they can get worse as people age.

All of this makes it very important for people with Marfan syndrome and related disorders to have ongoing monitoring, especially for life-threatening aspects of the condition like aortic enlargement. An accurate and early diagnosis helps to ensure proper treatment. Some treatments can prevent symptoms from getting worse and ultimately save lives.

Some signs are easy to see

Every person's experience with Marfan syndrome is slightly different. No one has every feature and people have different combinations of features. Some features of Marfan syndrome are easier to see than others. These include:

- Long arms, legs and fingers
- Tall and thin body type
- Curved spine
- Chest sinks in or sticks out
- Flexible joints
- Flat feet
- Crowded teeth
- Stretch marks on the skin that are not related to weight gain or loss

Other signs are harder to detect

Harder-to-detect signs of Marfan syndrome include heart problems, especially those related to the aorta, the large blood vessel that carries blood away from the heart to the rest of the body.

Other signs can include:

- Sudden lung collapse
- Eye problems, including severe nearsightedness, dislocated lens, detached retina, early glaucoma, and early cataracts.

Special tests are often needed to detect these features.

Learn more at Marfan.org.